



## ***COVID-19 Data Quality Audit Template: How It's Going and What We've Learned***

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**What Was Performed?** A special report that reviewed auditor's reports using the COVID-19 Data Quality Audit Template. This report reviews audit reports that have used the template and identifies common issue areas that provide insight and considerations for improving the economy and efficiency of Delaware's public health emergency response efforts.

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**Why This Engagement?** Under the Delaware Code, it is the State Auditor's responsibility to offer suggestions to improve efficiency and effectiveness in state government. This special report evaluates national and state trends in COVID-19 data quality that can help inform and improve the effectiveness of the state's response during public health emergencies.

### **What Was Found?**

- COVID-19 Data Quality Audit Template: The COVID-19 Data Quality Audit Template was developed as part of a bipartisan multistate effort to develop a consistent tool for states to assess their approach to data collection, reporting, and monitoring of coronavirus cases. The template has been used by 5 states so far with additional reports in progress in other offices.
- Demographic Data Issues: Many states noted issues collecting relevant demographic data. States lacking this data has significant challenges identifying higher risk groups and providing focused mitigation and treatment efforts. Some states leveraged other health information systems to improve data quality.
- Data Dashboards and Information Infrastructure: 4 out of 5 reports noted major challenges due to information systems that were unprepared for the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some lacked clear guidance on what data should be collected, but others noted antiquated systems that reduced the efficiency and accuracy of public health data collection efforts.
- Mortality Information and Data Quality Issues: Many reports found issues affecting mortality data and identifying cause of death. Differences in methodology in some states contributed to decreased public trust in data quality. Clear guidance regarding cause of death is an important subject of consideration for data collection efforts.
- Takeaways: Delaware can be more effective in future public health emergencies by proactively developing robust policies, procedures, and information systems.

The new special report, "COVID-19 Data Quality Audit Template: How It's Going and What We've Learned" can be found on [auditor.delaware.gov](https://auditor.delaware.gov).

Under [Delaware Code 2909](#), the State Auditor may produce special reports that examine state agencies' performance and offer recommendations for greater accuracy and efficiency, as well as data, information, and recommendations the auditor deems advisable and necessary.

Please do not reply to this email. For any questions regarding the attached report, please contact State Auditor Kathleen K. McGuinness at [Kathleen.Mcguinness@delaware.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Mcguinness@delaware.gov).

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